Department of Public Health and Human Services	Section: TIME LIMITED ASSISTANCE
TANF CASH ASSISTANCE	Subject: Incrementing MT Time Clock

Supersedes: TANF 802-1 (07/01/05)

References: 45 CFR 264.1; ARM 37.78.102; 38.78.202

GENERAL RULE-- Montana's TANF-60 clocks began incrementing February 1, 1997 for all ongoing and new Cash Assistance cases. Each adult, teen parent living independently, or minor parent, who is not eligible for an **exemption** or **exclusion**, will have their clock advance each month they receive TANF cash assistance.

There are two circumstances in which the **Montana** TANF timeclock will not increment. These are the **participating teen parent** exemption and the **Indian Country** exclusion. In addition to these two circumstances there are five categories of individuals who are also not subject to an individual time limit.

►**PARTICIPANTS NOT SUBJECT TO TIME-LIMITS**

The following participants are **NOT** subject to the individual time-limits imposed by federal and state regulation and rule. However, the individual will not be eligible if another required filing unit member has exhausted their 60-month time-limit. The only **exception** is when all adults in the filing unit qualify for TANF extended benefits. (See section 801-3 Extended Benefit Policy and Procedure.)

1.   Minor children living with a caretaker relative, who are under age 18 or under age 19 and attending school full-time. TEAMS **Code: 'C'** in the Adult/Child field on the SEPA screen; FIA/EP--NO);

2.   Minor children living with a caretaker relative who are age 16 through the month of his/her 18th birthday and are **not** attending school full-time, whether or not complying with his/her Family Investment Agreement/WoRC Employability Plan (FIA/EP). (TEAMS **Code: 'T'** in the Adult/Child field on the SEPA screen; FIA/EP--YES);

3.   Teen parent (under age 18, unmarried) through the month of his/her 18th birthday who is not living independently **and** is attending school full-time. (TEAMS **Code: 'N'** in the Adult/Child field on the SEPA screen; FIA/EP--NO); (see section 200 for independent living policy);

4.   Teen parent (under age 18, unmarried) through the month of his/her 18th birthday who is not living independently **and is not**

attending school full-time, as long as the teen parent is in compliance with his/her FIA/EP. (TEAMS **Code: 'F'** in the Adult/Child field on the SEPA screen; FIA/EP--YES);

5.   Adults whose participation code on SEPA is either '**OU' or 'DQ'** for any reason other than a sanction. (TEAMS **Code: 'A' or 'I'** in the Adult/Child field on SEPA screen; FIA/EP-- NO). (Example- under current policy a person DQ for an IPV or failing to provide a birth cert. will not have their MT time clock increment.)

►SANCTIONS

Individuals who are sanctioned are considered to be receiving benefits and their clock will advance during the sanction month. During the period of a sanction penalty month the time clock:
- **will not increment** for those receiving a time clock **exclusion (**living in Indian Country).
- **will increment** for those receiving a time clock **exemption** (teen parents living independently and for minor parents). See policy guidance below **"Loss of Exemption"**.

►EXEMPTION

The **only exemption** from the timeclock is for a **teen parent** (under age 18, unmarried) **living independently** or **minor parent** (under age 18, married). Provided these individuals are in compliance with his/her Family Investment Agreement/WoRC Employability Plan (FIA/EP) activities, they will be exempt from the TANF timeclock through the month of their 18th birthday.

EXEMPTION TEAMS PROCESSING

On the SEPA screen enter **'I'** in the "adult/child" field and '**PTP**' in the "Exempt" code field. The Eligibility Case Manager must set an alert on ETAL for the month of the individual's 18th birthday and document action taken in TEAMS Case Notes (CANO).

END/LOSS OF EXEMPTION

The timeclock must increment the month following the 18th birthday and while the individual is sanctioned for non-compliance with FIA/EP activities. The **exemption code must be removed** from the **SEPA** screen to allow the participant's timeclock to increment (see section 702-3). When the sanction has been served, the exemption status must be re-evaluated and, if still applicable, re-entered on TEAMS to stop the timeclock from incrementing.

EXCLUSION

The **only exclusion** from the Montana TANF timeclock is for individuals (regardless of race) living in **Indian Country**. Indian Country is defined as within the geographical boundaries of a reservation that has an **unemployment rate** above a federally specified amount. Exclusion status is reviewed by tribal officials and reported to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) who in turn publishes this as their labor force statistics. If changes occur, the TEAMS information is adjusted accordingly.

When households live <u>within the geographical boundaries</u> of the following reservations they qualify for this exclusion: Blackfeet, Fort Peck, Fort Belknap, Rocky Boy's, Northern Cheyenne and Crow.

NOTE: Due to the Flathead Reservation's current <u>unemployment</u> rate, there is NOT a timeclock exclusion for participants living on the Flathead Reservation.

EXCLUSION TEAMS PROCESSING

The exclusion process on TEAMS is completed in three steps.

1. The family's place of residence must be determined and identified on TEAMS by entering a 'Y' or 'N' in the 'Resides on a Reservation' field on the ADDR screen.

    NOTE: As the 'resides on a reservation' field is also used for other programs, this step must be completed regardless of whether the reservation qualifies as 'Indian Country' for TANF.

2. If the case is coded 'Y' on ADDR, TEAMS will check the residential ZIP code against the Timeclock Exclusion Table (TCEX). The TCEX Table lists towns that have been identified as either excluded by regulation OR designated as the mailing address for those adults living within the excluded reservation boundary. For example, the towns of Nashua and Culbertson are not within the boundaries of the Fort Peck Reservation, but participants <u>residing on the Reservation</u> use these towns (zip codes) as a mailing address; therefore, the ZIP codes of these towns are included on the TCEX table.

3. TEAMS will automatically enter a 'Y' in the Excluded Reservation field on the EXPD screen when there is both a 'Y' for resides on a reservation and the zip code is matched on the TCEX table as one qualified as "Indian Country". An informational message will be displayed on EXPD to notify the Eligibility Case Manager of eligibility for this exclusion. The indicator can be changed any time prior to issuance or authorization.

The TCEX Table will be updated if any reservation either loses or gains exclusion status. To access the TCEX Table (inquiry only):

1. From the SYSE Menu select TAME;
2. From TAME, select TAM3;
3. From TAM3, select TCEX.

►MOVE TO EXCLUDED RESERVATION

If the participant moves to an excluded reservation after benefits have been authorized, the case must be de-authorized either before or after changing the address and entering a 'Y' in the 'Reside on Reservation' field on the ADDR screen and then authorized again to assure the exclusion is recorded correctly. Check the EXPD screen for the 'Y' indicator. If the 'Y' indicator on ADDR is manually changed to an "N" and the case is authorized, the indicator cannot be changed back to a 'Y' until the case is de-authorized. (See section **1512-1 Case Transfer**)

►PREVIOUS COUNTABLE TRIBAL TANF

When a household that was receiving Tribal TANF applies for **Montana** TANF Cash Assistance, the timeclock must be evaluated to determine if Tribal TANF months need to be added to the Montana TANF timeclock. Receipt of Tribal TANF by those living outside the geographical boundaries of the reservation, is treated as if TANF had been received in another state. **(See Section 803-1 Out-of-State TANF Requests** for guidance on completing verification requests forms.**)**

> **NOTE:** Even though some Tribal TANF programs serve families that live both inside and outside the geographical boundaries of the reservation, the Indian Country timeclock exclusion only applies to those families that live on the reservation.

Please see section **103-7 Tribal TANF Plans** for guidance on the countable and excluded areas each Montana Tribal TANF program serves.

►TEAMS TRACKING

TEAMS will count the initial month's benefit as a full month even if the grant amount is pro-rated.

> **NOTE:** When inquiring on past months, TEAMS reads current time clock counts for benefits that have been issued, not what the clock was for that past month.

The MT TANF MONTHS USED field, which shows the highest number of months used by any adult in the household, who is coded 'IN' or 'DQ' with a sanction reason code, is displayed on AF SEPA, EXPD, and CASU.

The MT TANF MONTHS USED field on a person level (for each individual), is displayed on RECI, TICI, TICU, and PEHI.

> **NOTE:** None of the time clocks displayed on the above mentioned TEAMS screens, for either case or person, should be used to respond to out-of-state inquiries, as it is the State time clock displayed that may not match the Federal time clock.

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